

Case of Thomas Samson, Gent
Setting forth the Horrible Persecution and Oppression he has undergone, only for appearing in the Service of his King and Country.

Most Humbly Dedicated to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons in Parliament Assembled.

THAT the said *Samson* hath been a great sufferer in the Late Reign, and hath most Eminently shew'd his Zeal for the Protestant Religion, especially in the Kingdom of *Ireland*, in the time of the Popish Plot, he being obliged to go there to look after, and take up several Sums of Money due to himself and his Relations; by which means he came to have an Universal Acquaintance amongst the Nobility and Gentry there. So that those that were concerned in the discovery of the Popish Plot, informed the Lord Lieutenant and Council, that the said *Samson* must know something material, to strengthen their Evidence, in relation to the more full discovery thereof. Upon which he was summoned 100 Miles from his then place of Abode, to give an account thereof to the Lord Lieutenant in Council at *Dublin*; and gave them to much satisfaction in the matter, that he was forced to attend their Commands about Two Years; and thence commanded into *England* to give the same Account here. And the said *Samson* gave such satisfaction to both Houses of Parliament, that upon a Conference of both Houses, they voted, That there was a dangerous Plot in *Ireland*, and that the then Duke of York was principally concerned therein.

Some short time after, there were several Intelligences used to take off the Witnesses, and to turn the Plot upon the Protestants. And the said *Samson* was tempted by Mr. *Crabbe*, and others with the promise of a great Reward, if he would not appear against, or any way invalidate the Testimony of the Irish Evidence that were to come in against the Earl of *Sassburgh*, Sir *Robt. Clayton*, Sir *Francis Ward*, Sir *Tho. Player*, Col *Willm.* Sir *Tho. Fitzmaurice*, Mr. *Widdels*, and others. The said *Samson* acquainted the Earl of *Sassburgh*, Sir *Robt. Clayton*, Sir *Francis Ward*, Sir *Tho. Player*, Col *Willm.* Sir *Tho. Fitzmaurice*, Mr. *Widdels*, and others, that he would not appear against, or any way invalidate the Testimony of the Irish Evidence that were to come in against the Earl of *Sassburgh*, Sir *Robt. Clayton*, Sir *Francis Ward*, Sir *Tho. Player*, Col *Willm.* Sir *Tho. Fitzmaurice*, Mr. *Widdels*, and others. The said *Samson* then

(72)
then in the *Tower* ; and did, by the said Earl's Advice, insinuate himself into the Conversation of the *Irish* Evidence, insomuch that he got from them what they were to swear against the said Earl; and what Reward they were to have for the same. Of which he made Affidavit before Sir *Thomas Byles*, the Morning before the said Earl's Bill was brought before the Grand Jury at the *Old Bailey*, where the said *Samson* attended to justify his Affidavit, which was desired to be read (but denied); but the Grand Jury being acquainted before with it, with other things, the said Earl was acquitted.

Which Affidavit is at large printed in *Singly Bebb's* book of God's Providence, &c.

For which the said *Samson* so much incurred the Displeasure of the Court, that instead of receiving a Reward for his good Service, he was forced to fly into some remote place of the Kingdom, 200 miles from his Family ; where, by God's Providence, and his own Industry, he lived till the late happy Revolution.

And upon the Rumour of the *French* Landing, and the *Irish* committing Out-rages in the Country, the said *Samson* had the Honour of Heading 100 Horsemen, of the Gentry, Yeomen, and Farmers of the Countrey ; and in the Field, caused to be read the then Prince of *Orange's* Declaration, dated at *Sherbourn Castle*, the Prince being then newly landed.

After the happy Accession of his present Majesty to the Crown, the said *Samson* came to Town ; and having a Certificate under the Hands of above Twenty Lords, Knights and Gentlemen (all Parliament-men) of his Loyalty and Sufferings, he was recommended to be Post-master of *Lincoln-Branch* ; and the said *Samson* did obtain a Deputation for the same, gave Bonds, by Order of Major *Wildman*, the then Post-Master General, and by his Order, took a Clerk down with him, with promise to receive the Mail the next Week. He also provided himself with Four Servants, and Ten Horses, and all things necessary, where he continued at vast charge, for at least Ten Months, to his Expence of 450 *l.* But by Bribes, and other indirect means, was kept out, and never had the Mail sent him, the Postmaster General making no other Excuse for the same, but that it was not a time for honest men yet, as by Letters he hath ready to produce, will appear.

Whereupon Major *Wildman* being laid aside, the said *Samson* made his Application to the now Commissioners of the Post-Office, for the place, or satisfaction for his aforesaid great Expence ; but finding no redress from the said Commissioners, did petition the then Lords of the Treasury, and got an Order for an Hearing, but was the day before arrested upon a Fob-Action at the Treasury-Door, and kept in Prison six months before he could come to an Hearing. But at last he obtained his Liberty, and got an Hearing, and proved his Assertion. And it appearing to the Lords of the Treasury, by a Report from the said Commissioners of the Post-Office, That the said *Samson* had been the Origin of Raising *Lincoln-Branch*

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(43)

60 l. per annum; did by their Order, bearing date the 25th of Sept. 1692 order him 60 l. and recommended him as a person fit to be employed in the Post-Office; according to which the Commissioners of the Post-Office, gave him 20 l. per annum, out of *Lincoln Branch*, and this small Employment in the Penny-Post-Office, of 15 s. per week.

The said *Samsen* had not enjoyed this small Employment above Three Years (during which time there was no Complaint of his Mismanagement of his Office, but was always commended by the Commissioners of the Post-Office) until there arose a Complaint against the General Post-Office, exhibited to the Lords Justices about the Month of April, 1696. by Mr. *Ralph Blackball*. And he having the Misfortune (for so he may call it) before his hearing before the Lords of the Treasury (about his Abuses he received, in not enjoying his place of *Lincoln Branch*) to deliver the Commissioners of the Post-Office a Paper of Mr. *Blackball's* (a), containing Notorious Crimes that were committed in the Foreign Post-Office by Mr. *Leason*, the then Comptroller, and others; viz. of several Bags of Gold, weighing about 5 or 6 pound weight, and many Jewels imported in the *Holland Mail*, which neither paid Custom or Postage; as also divers Pacquets of *Flanders Lace*, some of which about two Foot long (imported in the same manner); as likewise for them to enquire what Money was paid for the King's use, and not accounted for; and for about 300 l. (b) at that time in Mr. *Leason's* hands, which he was not called upon for: And that which seems more wicked and dangerous than all the rest, why the said *Leason* did lie at *Bow* so long, and had the Mail brought thither to him before it came to the Office? To all which was given Directions, in *Blackball's* Paper how to find out the Offenders: Which Notorious Crimes the Commissioners of the Post Office did not examine into, but stifled the reading of the said Paper before the Lords of the Treasury. The King afterwards turning the said *Leason* out, by his special Order; and the said *Blackball*, as aforesaid, in April 96. bringing forth a Complaint of the Mismanagement of the Post Office, and causing the said *Samsen* first to be summoned by the Secretary of State; and then by the Lords Justices, to give his Testimony therein; and the same pinching very hard upon the Commissioners of the Post Office, in that they did not inspect the aforesaid Crimes before the said *Leason* was turned out by the King's Order, though what he swore, they acknowledged to be true. But he having no Encouragement, nor Protection from the Government (tho some of the Lords Justices gave him their word of Honour, That what he said in behalf of the King, should not turn to his disadvantage) yet was he left open to the Fury

(a) *Samsen* charging his being kept out by *Harbes*, and *Blackball* hearing of it, desired him to deliver this Paper.

(b) Part of which has since been begged off by the present Commissioners of the Post Office, and the residue is upon to this day.

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of the Commissioners, their Under Officers and Friends, who quickly made Havock of him, his Goods seized twice, the Office Rent, and other Monies kept from him too, on no Grounds; Himself dragged out of his Office by pretended Bailiffs, Soldiers and Ruffians, upon Fob Actions, and once without any Writ or Warrant, (c) the day before he was to appear before the Lords Justices, at an hearing; and Witnesses were prepared to swear against him: to wit, one *Hall*, who made an Affidavit against him; but being confronted before the Lords Justices, it did appear that he had the promise of two places for his Reward; which is since performed: and an *Irishman*, of Horrible Repute for swearing (tho he gave under his Hand, the very morning he appeared before the Lords Justices, of the said *Samson's* just management of the Office) yet before their Excellencies he swore *5d.* against him, that was wanting of the Box-money; which *Irishman* the Commissioners themselves were afterwards forced to turn out for Curfing and Swearing, and fighting with the men, and for reviling Protestant Books. — Thus the said *Samson* durst not come near his Office to do his Duty, but was forced to abscond, and keep a Man in his place. All these Hardships were put upon him, notwithstanding his Civility to the Commissioners; that tho Mr. *Blackball*, when he first summoned him the said *Samson*, told him, That *the King and Kingdom was in danger of being betrayed by the Post Office (d)*; yet having so great Esteem of the Commissioners, that when he was first Summoned before the Secretary of State, he went immediately, and gave them an account of what he was Summoned about, and what he had sworn, which they owned to be true, and desired him to learn out of *Blackball*, what he had to charge the Office withal? Which accordingly he did, and informed them what he could; who asked him, *What they had best to do?* In answer to which he advised them to examine into the matter, and turn out the Offenders, and even to a speedy hearing. Instead of doing of which, they took the Offenders parts, and bended all their Malice against the King's Witnesses. Under this sore Oppression, the said *Samson* petitioned His Majesty; Setting forth his Grievances, and pray'd Relief; but, by what means he knew not, was referred to the Commissioners of the Post Office, who are his mortal Enemies, and seek the Ruin of him and his Family. During this sore Persecution, and being in

(c) Upon which the said *Samson* and the Bayliff went before Justice *Neave*, in the *Mense*, who bound over the said Bailiff for committing a Riot in the King's Office.

At every turn he was to appear before the Lords Justices, he had a Fob Action put upon him.

(d) Since the said *Blackball* proved that Complaint against the Commissioners, he hath been often heard to say *he had matter enough against them and such as would bring their Lives in question*. Since which he hath been put into an Implemment which he does not understand, and kept out of the Foreign Office, where he might have done the King Service; and so his mouth is stop'd.

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his Office, he was arrested again in 3 Fob Actions, besides some Just Debts which fell upon him, and kept a considerable time in Prison, to the wasting of all he had left in the world: And when his Enemies could keep him in Prison no longer, the very Night he was discharged out of Prison, the Commissioners of the Post Office, in a barbarous manner, turned him out of his aforesaid small Employment, sending him his Discharge at 12 a Clock at Night, for fear he should come to his Office the next Morning. And thus he was stript and robbed of all his Substance, the Commissioners threatning any that should assist him, or hold any Correspondency with him. In this his sore distress, the King being in *Flanders*, he petitioned the Lords of the Treasury; setting forth his sore Grievances, and pray'd Redress. A Copy of which Petition is as follows:

To the Right Honourable the Lords of His Majesties Treasury.

The Humble Petition of *Thomas Samson*, Gent.

Sheweth,

That in consideration of your Petitioner's Services, great Expence, and Sufferings, before and at the late Revolution, your Petitioner was made Postmaster of *Lincoln-Branch*, in which Employment your Petitioner, by ill-usage, was damnified 450 l. Which, at an hearing before your Lordships, was fully proved.

That in consideration of the said Abuses, your Lordships were pleased to order your Petitioner 60 l. he having rais'd the Revenue of that Branch 60 l. per annum; and also 20 l. per annum out of the Revenue of the said Branch; and did likewise give your Petitioner the Employment of Chief Sorter of *Westminster Penny-Post Office*, till better provision could be made for him.

That there being a Complaint exhibited to their Excellencies the Lords Justices, against the Miscarriages of some persons in the Post Office; and your Petitioner being summoned by their Excellencies, to give an account of the Miscarriages of *Mr. Leason*, Comptroler of the Foreign Post Office, who was turned out by His Majesties Special Order. And your Petitioner having discover'd the Frauds of the Penny-Post Office, for which the Comptroler and Receiver were lately turn'd out. That upon your Petitioner's appearing according to his Summons, the Commissioners of the Post Office (tho they acknowledg'd all

all to be true your Petitioner said) yet they kept from him the aforesaid 20 l. per annum; and your Petitioner was afterwards continually persecuted, by stirring up his Creditors against him; and tho' what he owed in the World was not considerable, yet your Petitioner's Enemies, who had before threatened his Ruine, manag'd the matter with such malice, in several Actions, that it has cost your Petitioner five times as much as his said Original Debt; and several of his Debts not yet paid.

That your Petitioner having been lately kept in Prison a considerable time, to his great Expence, having some days since made a Composition with his Creditors, your Petitioner was no sooner freed out of Prison, but he was also turned out of his aforesaid Employment of Sorter of Westminster Penny-Post Office, which was only 15 s. per Week. So that your Petitioner, from one degree of Persecution to another, is at last brought to utter Ruine, only for his Zeal and Fidelity in appearing (when Summoned) in the behalf of his King and Country, according to his Oath and Duty. No Man being able justly to charge your Petitioner with the least Mismanagement in that wherein he has been entrusted.

Your Petitioner therefore most humbly prays your Lordships to consider the great Persecution and Depressure he lies under, by serving his King and Country Faithfully; and to continue your Petitioner in his aforesaid small Employment of Sorter of Westminster Penny-Post Office; and to order your Petitioner such other satisfaction for his great Abuses, as your Lordships in Justice shall see fit.

And your Petitioner, as in Duty bound, shall ever pray, &c.

Thomas Samson.

The said Samson's Petition being thus referr'd to the Commissioners of the Post Office, his profess'd Enemies (who were privy to all his Abuses) which, after some delay, they made a Report to the Lords of the Treasury, upon the said Petition; a Copy of which is as followeth:

To

To the Right Honourable the Lords of His Majesty's
Treasur

May it please your Lordships,

IN Obedience to your Lordships Order of Reference, of this 15th Instant, we have considered of the Petition of Thomas Samson, and do humbly acquaint your Lordships, That we have been informed the Petitioner was by Sir John Wildman (then Postmaster General) made Deputy Postmaster of Lincoln: But upon application of several Members of Parliament, and principle Gentlemen of that County, he was immediately removed from that Employment. It is possible he might be at some Charge upon that account, but to what Sum, it hath never appeared to us; it being a matter transacted long before we came into this Office.

As to the 2d Paragraph, he misrepresents the whole matter; the Case being thus: The Petitioner being very solicitous to be our Deputy for the Stage of Lincoln, and the places depending thereupon; finding us not desirous to comply with his desires, he being a person so unacceptable to the Country, did make a proposition to us, That he would advance to His Majesty 60 l. per annum, for that Branch, more than had been made of it before, provided he might be appointed our Deputy; which, tho we could not comply with, for the Reasons before mentioned, yet we made use of that Proposal to advance the Revenue of 60 l. per annum, as he offered. Whereupon he petitioned the then Lords of the Treasury, That they would be pleased to consider him for this peice of Service; which being referred to us, upon our Report, the Lords were pleased to give him 60 l. and likewise to recommend him to us for such an Employment as we should judge him qualified for: But a vacancy not hapning soon, and he being in a Low Condition, we did, out of compassion to him, so order the matter, that he received 20 l. per annum out of that Branch, as a Subsistence. Afterwards there hapning a vacancy in the Office, of Chief Sorter of Westminster Penny Post Office, we put him int it and likewise continued to him, for some time after, the 20 l. per annum, he pretending to be under distress, by reason of some Debts he was engaged in; but that he was allowed the 60 l. in consideration of the Abuses he pretends; or the 20 l. per annum out of the Lincoln Branch; or had the Employment of Chief Sorter of the Westminster Penny Post Office, given him by Order of the Lords of the Treasury, till a better Employment should fall, is altogether false.

As to the 3d Paragraph, he as much misrepresents the matter therein contained, as he hath done the former: and hath so jumbled, and confounded things together, that it is very difficult to give a short answer to it.

'Tis very true there was a Complaint given in the last Summer, to the Lords Justices, of some Miscarriages, by several Officers, in the Post Office, and the Petitioner was Summoned as a Witness thereupon: tho' what he had to say, chiefly related to matters Transacted four or five Years before, and did not concern any of the Officers then in the Post-Office.

He did indeed give in a Complaint against the Comptroler and Receiver of the Penny Post-Office, and Concerning the Revenue, but it was done in so confused a Manner, that their Excellencies thought it more proper to be Examined into before the Lords of the Treasury, but never Prosecuting his Complaint there, he afterwards Petitioned the House of Commons, where his Petition was laid aside, he afterwards Petitioned the King and Council, which his Majesty was pleased to refer to us: But he never taking out the Reference, we heard no more of it—One Mr. Bellamy did in January last, present a Petition to your Lordships, Complaining of Divers Irregularities and Abuses, committed in the management of the Penny Post-Office. And offering to Farm that Branch of the Revenue which being Referred, when he brought it to us, we acquainted him we were ready to hear him when ever he would appear before us, and make good his Complaint, but he did never think good to do it, so that they still avoided an Examination. But as to what the Petitioner alleges in the latter part of his Paragraph, That we Acknowledge all that he said to be true. We utterly deny, or that upon his appearing upon the Summons, we kept from him the 20 l. per Annum, for we thinking he was sufficiently provided for, had restored that part of the Branch to the Person to whom it properly belonged, before he exhibited his Complaint.

As to that part of his Petition whereby he alleges, He was Persecuted by stirring up his Creditors against him; We were no ways Privy to or concerned in the matter, or to his being detain'd in Prison, or his Composition with his Creditors. But he being above 50 l. in the Kings Debt; by making use of the Box Money contrary to his Duty, we thereupon Ten Months since ordered the Key to be taken from him, and tho' he had been often called upon to pay the said Money; yet he hath taken no care to do it or give any Security: And besides hath totally neglected his Duty, and absconded himself from his Duty, Whereupon we thought our selves obliged by the trust reposed in us to remove him, And Hope your Lordships will by no means, Judge it Reasonable to comply with his Petition, that he should be restored to his place, which might be an Encouragement to others to neglect their Duty, and defraud his Majesty, all which is humbly submitted to your Lordships Consideration.

General Post-Office, July 29. 1697.

R. Cotton. Tho. Frankland.

* They never sent for, or took away the Key untill the very instant of time he was before the Lords Justices.

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The said *Samson* having obtained a Copy of this Report, and finding it full of Injustice; To Vindicate himself, he quickly wrote an Answer to it, and presented it to the Lords of the Treasury. A Copy of which is as followeth,

To the Right Honourable, the Lords Commissioners of His Majesties Treasury.

The Humble Memorial of *Tho. Samson* Gent.

Sheweth,

That the said Tho. Samson having received a Copy of the Report made to your Lordships by the Commissioners of the Post-Office, upon his Petition presented to your Lordships the 14th of July last; and finding the same loaded with prejudice, and fill'd with Divers willful Errors and Mistakes, He the said *Tho. Samson* for the Justification of his own Innocency, does humbly make the following Answer.

In the first Paragraph of the Report, the Commissioners of the Post-Office acknowledge, *I was made Post-Master of Lincoln, and that I was at Charge, but what Summ they know not.*

As for that, It was in 1692. Proved before the Lords of the Treasury to be about 450 l. And whereas the Commissioners say, *That upon the Application of several Members of Parliament, and principal Gentlemen of that Country, I was immediately removed;* It's a gross mistake; for I was never removed, but was forced to leave the Employment, because Major *Wildman* did not send me the Mail; for which he made divers Excuses by his Letters to me; which Letters I have to produce. This Employment was given me for the Service I did the Publick, in the late Reigns, for which I was to my great expence, kept Seven Years from my Family, till His present Majesties Accession to the Crown.

In the Second Paragraph the Commissioners say, *I mis-represent that whole matter, and that my pretending, I was allowed the 60 l. in Consideration of the Abuses I received, or the 20 l. per Annum out of Lincoln Branch, or had the Employment of Chief Sorter of Westminster Penny Post-Office, given me by order of the Lords of the Treasury, is altogether false.*

To which I Answer, That the Lords of the Treasury by their Order of the 26th of Sept. 91. Directed the Commissioners of the Post-Office, to order their Cashier to Pay me 60 l. and also directed them as soon as conveniently they could, to give me such an Employment in the Post-Office as they should Judge me best qualified for; their Lordships looking upon me to be a Person, well acquainted with the business relating to the said Office. In Obedience to which Order, the Commissioners of the Post-Office gave me the abovesaid Employment, with the other Benefits afore-mention'd. And without that order, they had never done any thing for me; Therefore I think I am in the Right to say, *The Lords of the Treasury gave me what I had.* Because without their Lordships Order, I am sure I should have had nothing. Therefore what the Commissioners mean by this Quibble, or rather false Assertion in their Report I know not.

And as for what they alledge, of my being so unacceptable to the Country, it's only their Pleasure to say so. For I heard of none that knew me, who opposed me, but such as opposed the reading of the Prince of Oranges Declaration, which I had read to the Gentry of the Country, being then at the Head of One Hundred Horsemen of the Gentry, Yeomen, and Farmers, &c. And at my coming to London had a Certificate, of my Service and Affection to the Government, signed by above 20 Lords, Knights and Gentlemen, who were Members of Parliament: All which the Commissioners very well know, tho they are not so Just and Impartial as to report it in my behalf; But after they have made me poor for doing my Duty, then they cast Reflections upon my Reputation.

In the Third Paragraph of their Report, the Commissioners seem to be angry, and say, *I have misrepresented, jumbled, and confounded things together;* However, they say, *its very true, there was a Complaint given in the last Summer to the Lords Justices of some Miscarriages, by several Officers in the Post-Office, and that I was Summoned as a Witness thereupon;* And that what I had to say, chiefly related to matters transacted Four or Five Years before, and did not concern any of the Officers then in the Post-Office.

To which I Answer, That this is a willful mistake, for what I said before the Lords Justices in Obedience to my Summons, I do averr did concern some of the Officers then in the Post Office, and those of the highest Rank, &c. The Commissioners themselves. For when I came before the Lords Justices, a Paper was shewn me, containing Divers Heads of Notorious Crimes, committed by one Mr. Leason the late Comptroler of the Foreign Post-Office, and others; which Paper I declared upon Oath, I had communicated to the Commissioners of the Post-Office, some Years before, Mr. Leason being then Comptroler. But Notwithstanding, they were thus acquainted with his Evil Practices, which tended to the defrauding;

frauding and betraying the King and Kingdom. Yet the said Commissioners instead of turning him out, or bringing him to Punishment, did so stifle and overlook his Crimes that they kept him in the Office, above a Year after they were acquainted by me with his Evil Practices, till the matter Circulated so, that the King was acquainted with it, And the said *Leason* was turned out by His Majesties special order, And not by any order of the Commissioners. For it appears that they were very unwilling to part with him at last, His Majesty being forced to send three times to command the turning of him out, before the Commissioners would pay any obedience. So that here the Commissioners are in a very gross and willful mistake to say, that what I was Summoned about did not concern any Officer then in the Post-Office, when it so flatly charged, the Commissioners themselves with unfaithfulness and willful Breach of Trust, and I am sensible (to my sorrow) that it stuck the hardest upon them of any matter in that Complaint: For upon my giving in this Testimony the Foundation of my Ruine was laid, which hereafter shall be shewn; For the Commissioners Malice against me was, because I would not mince my Testimony, and say, That I did not shew *Leasons Paper* to the Commissioners, till after *Leason* was turned out by the Kings Order.

The Commissioners are also pleased to say, that my Complaint given in to the Lords Justices, against the Penny Post-Office was done in a confused manner, that their Excellencies thought it more proper to be Examined before the Lords of the Treasury: And that I never Prosecuted my Complaint there, and that I afterwards Petitioned the House of Commons, where my Petition was laid aside, and that I afterwards Petitioned the King and Council; And that His Majesty was pleased to refer my Petition to them, and that I never taking out the Reference, they never heard more of it.

To which I Answer, That the Commissioners who Tax me with Jumbling and Confusion are here a little guilty of it themselves. For whereas His Majesty and the Lords Justices, saw just cause in my Complaint against the Penny Post-Office, to turn out the Comptroler and Receiver, the Commissioners here are pleased to say, that my Complaint was done in so confused a manner, that their Excellencies thought it fit, and more proper to be Examined by the Lords of the Treasury. Intimating thereby; as if His Majesty and the Lords Justices, had first turned out the Comptroler and Receiver of the Penny Post: and afterwards ordered the Truth of the Complaint to be Examined; So that that Reflection the Commissioners thought to have thrown upon me, They have for want of due consideration, rudely thrown upon His Majesty, and the Lords Justices. For as for the turning out the aforesaid Persons, I can for my part only affirm, that His Majesty and their Excellencies, had very good grounds for it: And I neither can nor dare

call their Justice in Question, though the Commissioners have here endeavoured to do it.

And whereas the Commissioners say, That I petition'd the House of Commons, and that my Petition was laid aside.

The reason of it was, because some of the Treasury acquainted the House, (at the reading my Petition,) that their Lordships would examine the Matter at their Board; and the reason why I never Prosecuted the Matter before the Treasury, was, because I then heard of the turning out of the Comptroler and Receiver; and so I think I had good reason to let the Matter drop, when I saw the Offenders were turned out.

The Commissioners say, I afterwards Petition'd the King and Council, but it was not against the Penny-Post-Office, as they seem to intimate, but for a Reward for my Service; and that His Majesty was pleased to refer the Petition to them, and that in ever taking out the Reference; they heard no more of it.

It's very true, I never did take out the Reference, and I think I had good reason for it: For first, it would have cost me some Money in Fees, which the Commissioner's Usage had made very scarce with me, and then I knew I was referred to my Mortal Enemies, to report what Reward was fit to be given me for proving their own evil Practices, who, no doubt, would rejoyce at my Ruine. The truth of which Suggestion appears not only by this malicious partial Report, but by many other Instances by which I remain at present in this ruined Condition, for doing my Duty. I afterwards instead of taking out the Reference, Petition'd the King again, humbly acquainting His Majesty that I was referred to my Mortal Enemies, but His Majesty being then upon going to Flanders, I knew not what became of my Petition. As to the Story the Commissioners relate, about one Mr. Belamy, I know not what it relates to me, for Mr. Belamy is not so much as mention'd in my Petition, nor any thing concerning him, so that this being utterly foreign to the Matter, I shall not trouble your Lordships with an Answer to it.

And whereas the Commissioners say, That they utterly deny what they acknowledged to be true, viz. what I alledged against them before the Lords Justices

I do affirm the contrary, For the truth of which I refer to the Lords Justices Minuits, as well as to the Testimony of those besides my self, that were present at that time before their Excellencies. And for what they say, that they did not keep the 20 l. per Ann. from me, upon appearing upon my Summons, they may quibble the Matter as they please, for the

the Commissioners know in their own Conscience, that this and all the other Mischiefs came upon me only for appearing in the behalf of my King and Country, according to my Allegiance and Duty.

And whereas the Commissioners seek to deny that they had any hand in standing up my Creditors, or keeping me in Prison,

I wish their Consciences were as clear of it as they pretend, for I have good Cause to conclude, That they have been the sowers and fomenters of all my Abuses and Persecutions, Mr. Frankland having declared, that he would be my Ruine one way or other. A particular Instance of whose Malice I shall give as followeth.

When I was Summoned before the Lords Justices, The Commissioners brought one Hall to swear against me. To invalidate whose Testimony, one Mr. Nath. Rogers made Affidavit, that some time before, the said Hall told him in the Park, that he should have two or three Places in the Penny-Post Office to dispose of, which now appears to be true, for no longer had I discharged my self out of Prison, but the Commissioners sent me a Discharge from my Employment at Twelve a Clock at Night, for fear I should come to my Office the next Morning, the Commissioners having put one Mr. Redish into my Place: A Gentleman discoursing Mr. Frankland concerning their Power of disposing of Impressments in the Penny-Post Office, and whether it did not properly lye in Mr. Dockers the Comptroller, Mr. Frankland answered, that he would dispute those things hereafter; but as for this place of Mr. Sanson's, it was promised six Months before Mr. Dockers was Comptroller, so that Mr. Rogers's Affidavit, and Mr. Frankland's own Words do agree so exactly together, about my being turned out, that it plainly appears, my Ruine was designed by the Commissioners, at my first being Summoned against them, which Ruine is now brought to pass. I can produce Mr. Rogers's Affidavit, and I am sure the Gentleman I mention (tho' perhaps he may be Mr. Frankland's Friend) cannot, if call'd, refuse to make Oath that Mr. Frankland told him the Words here mention'd, and I hope I am the last that shall be thus used, for standing up to detect Treachery and Fraud.

And whereas the Commissioners say, I am run above 50 l. in Debt to the King, by making use of the Roy. Money, and that I have been often call'd up to pay the said Money, &c.

I answer, That the Commissioners are not able to prove this Assertion, and if they will call Mr. Gulling, the late Receiver, to Account, who is considerably indebted to the King, I will not only prove that I owe the King nothing, but that this 50 l. that the Commissioners charge upon

* This same Hall had since a Place given him, and his Friend another in the Penny-Post Office.

me,

use, the King has been defended off by Mr. Golling, which shews they are willing (if they can) to remove his Faults, and lay them on my Shoulders.

An as for their often calling on me to pay the said Money, I do affirm, they never did. But I on the contrary, have often desired them to call Mr. Golling to an Account, and because I pressed it too hard; * Some days since I was way-laid by Mr. Golling, who coming upon me at unawares, with some secret Weapon in his Hand, wounded me in a dangerous manner, and had not the People come to my Assistance, I had in all probability been Massacred; And this, (instead of Relief) is added to all the Persecutions and Ruine of my Family.

It is not very likely I should be in the King's Debt, that have gone through thick and thin to serve him, till I have never a Penny in my Pocket. No, it's more likely, that the Commissioners, or some of their Officers, should be in his Debt, who openly appear to the World, to flow in Riches, some of whom (by their Employments) have sprung up like Mushrooms in a Night; I say, it's more likely that such as those should owe the King Money than I, who, by serving him faithfully, am brought lower than a Morsel of Bread. However, if these Commissioners will call Golling to Account, I will prove what I say, and without his Account 'tis impossible I should make up mine.

As for the absconding from the Business of my Office, which they insert as a Crime, I must relate it to your Lordships as a very sore Grievance.

(4) I was several times dragged out of my Office by Bayliffs and other Ruffians employed for that purpose, and once without Writ or Warrant. The day before I was to appear before the Lords Justices, my Goods were seiz'd twice, and all upon little or no Grounds, to the raising those small Debts I had to five times the value, and several of my Debts not yet paid, as I have set forth in my Petition, the particulars of which Tragical Abuses, would be too long to trouble your Lordships with. Besides this, there was one Grace an Irish Man of very ill Repate for Swearing, kept in my Office, to take all opportunities to swear against me, so that at last, I durst not come near my Office, but only in private, and was forced to hire one in my place to do my Business, which Charge sunk very deep in my small Wages of 15 s. per Week, so that the Commissioners do exceedingly shew their Prejudice against me, in representing this to your Lordships as a Fault that they know in their Consciences was so great a Burthen and Grievance to me.

* Golling is since Convicted for the said Assault and fined 20 Marks to the King.
 (5) What Debts I owed were occasioned by serving my King and Country.

And

And whereas they say they thought themselves obliged by the Trust reposed in them to remove me.

I Answer, That the doing an Act of Injustice could not be through an y consideration of their Duty, but to gratifie their Malice against me, according to the Platform laid for my Ruine, as appears by Mr. Rogers's Affidavit, that I was to be turned out, and Mr. Frankland's own Words agreeing therewith, that my Place was promised six Months before Mr. Dochera came into the Penny-Post-Office.

And whereas the Commissioners, at though they would forestall your Lordships Judgments, say, that they hope your Lordships will by no means judge it reasonable to comply with my Petition, that I should be restored to my Place, which might be an Incouragement to others, to neglect their Duty, and defraud His Majesty.

I also humbly hope and pray that your Lordships will not think it reasonable, that I should be a Sacrifice to these Commissioners Malice; for standing up according to my Duty, to detect Treachery and Fraud, and more especially when I was lawfully call'd by Authority to do the same. I say, I most humbly pray your Lordships to consider my Barbarous Treatment, and Rescue me out of the hands of Oppression. Otherwise to use the Commissioners own Words which (they wrongfully apply to me; *It may be an Incouragement to others, to neglect their Duty, and defraud His Majesty, as well as a publick Scandal to the Government.*

All which I humbly submit to your Lordships Consideration.

And. Aug. 11. 97.

Thomas Samson.

I Presented this my Reply to the Treasury the 11th day of August, 1697, but whether it was too full of Truth, and made the Commissioners of the Post-Office's Actions too odious, (or for what other Cause I know not) but I could by no means get it Read, though I four times Petition'd the Treasury, setting forth my intollerable Abuses, and humbly praying to be heard Face to Face with the said Commissioners.

Whilst I was thus soliciting to be heard, Another way was contriv'd to afflict me, for the General Penny-Post-Office at Westminster being kept in my House, one Mr. Redish, one of the K Servants in the Entry (a) (who was put

(a) Note, That Redish having a Place at Court of double the value, and not understanding the Penny-Post-Office. The King is now at near 30 per An. Charge for another Person more than before to Officiate.

